

Caton St Paul's CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119524
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379827
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2012
Lead inspector	Janette Corlett

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miles Rucklidge
Headteacher	Carole O'Hare
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Janette Corlett

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed six teachers teaching eight lessons or parts of lessons, of which one was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made short visits to a number of support sessions, where extra help is provided for pupils by trained assistants, and to the after-school club. The inspector talked to groups of pupils in lessons, during breaks and the lunch hour and listened to a sample of pupils reading independently. Discussions were held with two members of the governing body, an adviser from the local authority and school staff including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and middle leaders. The inspector looked at the online questionnaire (Parent View) but there were too few responses to aid inspection planning. She observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents including the school development plan, safeguarding documents together with child protection and anti-bullying policies. Also, the inspector analysed 95 questionnaires from parents and carers and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A lower than average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and/or speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. The school exceeds the current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school provides a daily after-school club.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. The great majority of pupils make good progress as they move through the school. However, more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 do not always reach the highest possible standards of which they are capable and this is why the quality of education provided by the school is good rather than outstanding.
- Pupils' achievement is good. They reach well above average standards at the end of Key Stage 2 and this prepares them well for the next stage in their education.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and swiftly develop skills as independent and confident learners. The activities and resources for children to learn and play outdoors are not quite as stimulating as they are indoors and are not always matched well enough to children's learning needs. This means that at times progress is not as fast as it could be. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers engage pupils in lessons with interesting tasks and activities, which extend their thinking and motivate them to learn. Occasionally, in Key Stage 1, there is not enough challenge for more-able pupils and they do not achieve quite as much as they could.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Most say that they really enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in their above-average attendance. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent and they have very positive attitudes to learning. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say that their children feel safe in school and that school staff are welcoming, friendly and very supportive.
- The school promotes pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well through a good curriculum which is rich in opportunities for pupils to explore and celebrate diversity in British and global society. Strong leadership of teaching and learning and rigorous performance management procedures have brought about improvements in pupils' overall attainment, particularly in writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the level of challenge for more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 so that more of them reach the standards of which they are capable in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- Improve the outdoor learning environment in the Reception class, so that it is of the same high quality as that indoors and offers a range of activities always closely matched to support children's learning in all six areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is good. From slightly above expected levels of skills and development on entry to the Reception class, their attainment in English and mathematics is well above the national average by the end of Year 6. Children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The highly skilled teacher and support assistant build on the children's own experiences. They maintain a careful balance between those activities which children choose by themselves, and those which are directed by adults so that not a moment of learning time is wasted. While provision outside is not as good as it is indoors, children nevertheless work and play well together, sharing and helping each other. Pupils' progress through the rest of the school is good and has improved since the last inspection. For example, due to a recent drive in Key Stage 2 to increase pupils' confidence in using calculation skills, attainment is rising in mathematics. Similarly the gap over time between boys' and girls' progress across Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics has been eradicated. Pupils are well motivated, work hard and enjoy their lessons. Progress is good because the pace of learning is swift and pupils are actively involved in stimulating tasks which are well matched to their individual abilities. The progress of more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 is a little less rapid because they occasionally spend too much time consolidating prior learning when they are ready to move on. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress from their individual starting points because they are well supported in whole class sessions as well as through individual or small group sessions.

Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 is above average. Pupils confidently use their knowledge of the links between letters and sounds to break down words and pronounce them and they demonstrate good comprehension skills for children of this age. By Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading is well above average and most pupils take real pleasure in reading both at home and in school. Adult volunteers support the school by listening to pupils read and encouraging them to read aloud fluently and with expression. Questionnaire responses showed that the vast majority of parents and carers believe that the school supports their children to achieve well. Inspection evidence confirms this.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding, which is a view shared by parents and carers. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make effective use of skilful questioning to engage pupils and extend their thinking. They are particularly successful in making learning

more interesting through setting tasks which are relevant to pupils' own experiences, have a real purpose and link subject areas together across the curriculum. For example, in one class pupils were given the task of designing and planning a patio area. They began with some simple mathematical calculations in terms of area and perimeter, but swiftly extended this into estimating and comparing costs and even calculated how much could be saved by waiting for a sale in a local store. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to enhance learning and pupils develop very good skills in using and presenting information. In one project, pupils researched the Gambia on the internet, used the information gained as a stimulus to learning about the features of persuasive text and then designed a tourist brochure. In the Reception class, in the indoor area, teachers plan engaging tasks that are well matched to children's level of learning and interest, but in the outdoor area some activities are not matched well enough to children's learning and so opportunities are lost to help children progress even faster.

Teachers and support staff promote pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by encouraging them to treat each other and adults in the school with respect, to listen to and value one another's viewpoint and to be aware of the potential impact of a thoughtless or unkind word or gesture. Teachers develop this further throughout the wider curriculum. For example, older pupils recently explored the rights of children on the United Nations website. They expanded on these, using their own thoughts and ideas and produced sensitive and thought provoking individual websites with hyperlinks to further information. Teachers' planning is usually based firmly on secure assessment of prior learning. As a result, gaps in understanding are identified at the earliest possible stage and pupils who may need a little extra help receive swift support. Teachers set detailed individual targets for improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils say that they find these helpful and they have a clear understanding of how to be successful in achieving them. Marking has improved recently and pupils increasingly have more guidance on how to improve their work. This is having a further impact on raising attainment and accelerating progress, particularly in writing.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The atmosphere in school is warm, happy and stimulating for youngsters. As a result, attendance is high and few pupils are ever late for school. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, a view shared by parents and carers. Pupils are unfailingly friendly, polite and courteous and letters received from places the children have visited or from visitors to the school are testament to their exemplary conduct. Pupils are really eager to learn and behave very sensibly in lessons and as they move around the school at breaks and lunchtimes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage swiftly learn to share toys willingly and they really enjoy helping with tidying-up activities. Older pupils take great pride in helping them and there is a real sense that the school is one big family. For example, in whole-school assemblies Year 6 pupils bring the small children into the hall and then sit with them to model good behaviour and make sure they feel comfortable and secure in a large group.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say that pupils feel safe in school. Pupils agree. They say that there is no bullying of any kind – just the occasional falling out – and they know that the staff are there to help them and are always willing to listen to any concerns. There are no reported incidents of racism because the school celebrates diversity and actively fosters tolerance and understanding. Pupils are aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying and understand how to keep themselves safe when using computers or mobile

phones. Older pupils receive training in cycling proficiency and develop an excellent understanding of road safety.

Pupils recognise that there are many children in the world less fortunate than themselves, but also understand that any help they can give is most effective when it supports opportunities for sustainable development. For example, they recently raised funds for Christian Aid and bought a herd of goats for an African community.

Leadership and management

Strong direction and an ambitious vision for improvement from the experienced headteacher have resulted in an effective leadership team and a good and improving picture of achievement across the school. Robust and rigorous systems for tracking pupils' progress combined with accurate self-evaluation and identification of appropriate priorities for improvement, demonstrate the school's good capacity to bring about further improvements. School leaders regularly observe lessons and check teachers' planning and pupils' work in books. This means that any pupils in danger of falling behind in their work are swiftly identified. Leaders systematically monitor the impact of targeted support for these pupils and for those pupils with special educational needs, and this makes it possible to judge whether or not the support has been effective and to plan for even more improvements. The quality of teaching has been strengthened through appropriate professional development and support for teachers. As a result, teaching is consistently good and an increasing proportion is outstanding.

The impact of the curriculum on outcomes for pupils is good. Pupils enjoy a broad range of extra-curricular activities including the very popular Zumba class, art club and lunchtime gardening club run by parents. Parents and carers appreciate the school's provision of a daily after-school club, which supports families and provides a range of interesting activities for pupils to extend their school day. Residential visits for pupils in Key Stage 2 are eagerly anticipated and provide yet another opportunity to promote pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils benefit from a strong musical and performing arts tradition in the school and participate enthusiastically in concerts and shows. Additionally, they learn to speak French and have the chance to correspond in this language with pupils of similar age in a French primary school.

Members of the governing body are well informed, supportive and active within the school. They regularly take part in training and work alongside teachers and support staff to gain further insights into the school improvement process. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. This is an inclusive school which effectively promotes good equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination. As a result, most pupils achieve to their potential and move on to the next phase in their education as confident and independent learners.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Caton St Paul's CE Primary School, Lancaster, LA2 9PJ

Thank you so much for the very warm welcome you gave me when I inspected your school. You were all incredibly polite, courteous and helpful and I judged your behaviour to be outstanding, which is the very best it can be. A special thank you to those of you who were so very friendly and willing to give up your time to tell me how much you enjoy coming to school where you feel really safe and find lessons interesting and exciting. I also enjoyed speaking to some of you in French and was very impressed with the way you introduced yourselves.

I judged that your school is good. The headteacher, all the staff and governors are helping you to improve the progress you make so that the standards you reach at the end of Year 6 are much higher than the national average. I have asked your teachers to help you to make even faster progress by making sure that the activities and tasks given in lessons in Key Stage 1 are sufficiently challenging for all of you to help you to reach the highest possible standards at the end of Year 2. Additionally, I have asked them to improve the outdoor learning environment for children in the Reception class so that the children in this class make just as much progress outdoors as they do indoors.

You can help too by continuing to try really hard, listening to teachers' instructions and continuing to look after each other so that all of your school family feel very safe and really enjoy coming to school.

Very well done and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Janette Corlett
Lead inspector

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